PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference DM/CP/P13045PC	**FOR FURTHER ACTION**	See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)
International application No. PCT/GB 03/03315	International filing date *(day/month/year)* 30.07.2003	Priority date *(day/month/year)* 03.08.2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC B60K37/02		
Applicant JOHN MCGAVIGAN LIMITED ET AL.		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.

2. This REPORT consists of a total of 5 sheets, including this cover sheet.

   ☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

   These annexes consist of a total of 10 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

   - I ☒ Basis of the opinion
   - II ☐ Priority
   - III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
   - IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
   - V ☒ Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
   - VI ☐ Certain documents cited
   - VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
   - VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand	Date of completion of this report
02.03.2004	10.11.2004
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority: European Patent Office - P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL-2280 HV Rijswijk - Pays Bas Tel. +31 70 340 - 2040 Tx: 31 651 epo nl Fax: +31 70 340 - 3016	Authorized Officer Clasen, M Telephone No. +31 70 340-3407

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/GB 03/03315

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the **elements** of the international application *(Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17))*:

Description, Pages

1-20 as originally filed

Claims, Numbers

1-51 received on 05.08.2004 with letter of 29.07.2004

Drawings, Sheets

1/7-7/7 as originally filed

2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages:
- ☐ the claims, Nos.:
- ☐ the drawings, sheets:

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)).

   (Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes:	Claims	1-51
	No:	Claims	
Inventive step (IS)	Yes:	Claims	51
	No:	Claims	1-50
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes:	Claims	1-51
	No:	Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

   see separate sheet

Re Item V

Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. The present application does not meet the criteria of Article 33(1) PCT, because the subject-matter of claim 1 does not involve an inventive step in the sense of Article 33(3) PCT.
Document US,A,5702078 (D1) discloses an appliqué adapted for use in an instrument, instrument cluster or instrument panel including most of the features of claim 1.
The only feature not known from D1 is that the at least one ring portion integrally forms a closed shape which encloses the at least one planar portion and that the rim portion is of a first colour and the planar portion is of a second colour.

These features represent however merely two of several straightforward possibilities from which the skilled person would select, in accordance with circumstances, without the exercise of inventive skill, in order to solve the problem posed.

2. By corresponding reasons the subject-matter of method claim 44 lacks an inventive step.

3. The features of dependent claims 2 to 43 and 45 to 50 represent technical features known per se and used in a conventional manner. As such they cannot give rise to an inventive step. Claims 4 to 6 therefore lacks an inventive activity.

4. Concerning the subject-matter of claim 51, the document D1 discloses

a display panel, decorative panel, instrument panel or appliqué for a vehicle such as an automotive vehicle, comprising a sheet form member having at least one portion integrally formed thereon, the at least one portion having a height of at least 4mm from a surface of the sheet form member, said portion projecting from a substantially planar first, front or obverse surface of the sheet form member, the at least one portion being upstanding from an obverse surface of the sheet form member, such that the at least one portion is convex when viewed from the obverse surface of the sheet form member, and is concave when viewed from a second, rear or reverse surface of the sheet form member.

5. The problem to be solved can therefore be regarded as applying this easy and in only a few steps to be manufactured appliqué for a display panel for a vehicle.
The solution as suggested by features of claim 51 that said first portion defines a boundary of a speedometer gauge and a second portion defines a boundary of an engine speed or rev counter or clock is not known in the prior art and it would not be obvious to incorporate it in D1.
Claim 51 is therefore considered as involving an inventive step (Article 33(3) PCT).

CLAIMS

1. An appliqué adapted for use in an instrument, instrument cluster or instrument panel of an automotive vehicle, the appliqué comprising a sheet form member having an obverse side and a reverse side and comprising a plastics material, the sheet form member comprising:

at least one substantially planar portion having an obverse area on the obverse side and a reverse area on the reverse side;

at least one rim or ring portion integrally formed with the or the respective at least one substantially planar portion, the or each at least one rim portion forming a closed shape which encloses the or the respective at least one substantially planar portion;

a further substantially planar portion having a further obverse area on the obverse side and a further reverse area on the reverse side, the or each further substantially planar portion being integrally formed with the or the respective at least one rim portion, the further substantially planar portion surrounding the or the respective at least one rim portion;

the at least one rim portion protruding from the or the respective obverse area and from the further obverse area by a height of at least 4mm, and the at least one rim portion being recessed from the or the respective reverse area and further reverse area, and wherein

the or each at least one rim portion is of a first colour and the or the respective substantially planar portion is of a second colour different to the first colour.

2. An appliqué as claimed in claim 1, wherein the further substantially planar portion is of the second colour.

3. An appliqué as claimed in either of claims 1 or 2, wherein the first colour is silver or chrome and the second colour is black.

4. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3, wherein there are provided at least two rim portions at least one of said rim portions having a height of at least 4 mm from the respective obverse area and a further obverse area common to each of the at least two rim portions.

5. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein there are provided two rim portions, each having a height of at least 4 mm from the obverse side, the two portions being located side by side.

6. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein an ink coating is applied to a surface of at

least one rim portion, a pigment of an ink of the ink coating being dissolved in a high temperature resin base.

7. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the height of the at least one rim portion is between 4 mm and 9 mm.

8. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the height of the at least one rim portion is 4 mm to 7.5 mm.

9. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the height of the at least one rim portion is 6.5 mm.

10. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the closed shape is selected from one of: substantially circular, oval or elliptical.

11. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the or each substantially planar portion is provided with dial chaplets.

12. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the at least one rim portion comprises a first wall, a second wall, a top part and an open base part.

13. An appliqué as claimed in claim 12, wherein the base part of the at least one rim portion has a width from an

outer-most side of the second wall to an inner-most side of the first wall from 5mm to 9mm.

14. An appliqué as claimed in either of claims 12 or 13, wherein the first wall is convex in shape when viewed from the obverse side of the sheet form member.

15. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 12 to 14, wherein the first wall of the at least one rim portion comprises part of a circle having a radius of 10 mm to 20 mm.

16. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 12 to 15, wherein the second wall of the at least one rim portion is substantially vertical.

17. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 12 to 15, wherein the second wall is inclined at a shallow angle to the top part of the respective at least one rim portion.

18. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 12 to 17, wherein the first wall protrudes more from the obverse side than the second wall does from the obverse side, and the top part comprises part of a circle having a radius of 0.5 mm.

19. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the sheet form member is provided with a pressure sensitive adhesive coated on the reverse side.

20. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein a spacing between outer-most walls of adjacent rim portions is 45 mm to 50 mm.

21. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 2 to 21, wherein the at least one substantially planar portion and the further substantially planar portion have a thickness of between 0.25 mm and 0.5 mm.

22. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the plastics material substantially comprises polycarbonate or ABS.

23. An appliqué as claimed in any of the preceding claims, wherein the plastics material comprises a blend of polycarbonate and poly-butylene-terraphthalate (PBT).

24. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the sheet form member is provided with a printed design.

25. An appliqué as claimed in claim 24, wherein the printed design is provided by printing on the obverse side and on the reverse side of the sheet form member.

26. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the sheet form member is a laminate comprising two or more layers laminated together.

27. An appliqué as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein an ink coating is provided on the at least one rim portion, such as an obverse surface thereof, a pigment of an ink of the ink coating being dissolved in a high temperature resin base.

28. An appliqué as claimed in claim 27, wherein the high temperature resin base has a softening temperature of above 160°C.

29. An appliqué as claimed in either of claims 27 or 28, wherein the resin base for the ink coating is a dissolved plastics material or acrylic cellulose acetate butyrate.

30. An appliqué as claimed in claims 29, wherein the plastics material is a copolycarbonate which is a combination of bisphenol A (4,4'-isopropylidenediphenol) and bisphenol TMC (trimethylenecylohexane bisphenol).

31. An appliqué as claimed in either of claims 29 or 30, wherein the plastics material is dissolved in a non-halogenated solvent.

32. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 27 to 31, wherein the high temperature resin based ink contains a chrome and/or aluminium pigment.

33. An appliqué as claimed in claims 32, wherein the pigment comprises particles or flakes having an average

size in the range of 5 microns to 55 microns in diameter or length.

34. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 27 to 33, wherein the ink coating forms a closed shape, the closed shape optionally being annular, oval or elliptical.

35. An appliqué as claimed in any of claims 1 to 26, wherein an ink coating is provided on the at least one rim portion, such as an obverse surface thereof, a pigment of an ink of the ink coating being dissolved in an acrylic cellulose acetate butyrate resin base.

36. An appliqué as claimed in claim 35, wherein the pigment comprises particles or flakes having an average size in the range of 5 microns to 55 microns in diameter or length.

37. A component for an automotive vehicle comprising an appliqué according to any of claims 1 to 36.

38. A component as claimed in claim 37, wherein the component comprises an instrument, instrument cluster, instrument panel, gauge or control assembly for an automotive vehicle.

39. A component as claimed in either of claims 37 or 38, wherein the component further comprises a rigid backing part having the appliqué mounted thereto.

40. A component as claimed in claim 39, wherein the appliqué is moulded to the backing part.

41. A component as claimed in claim 39, wherein the appliqué is glued or clipped to the backing part.

41. A component as claimed in any of claims 39 to 41, wherein the backing part is made from a plastics material such as polycarbonate or ABS.

43. An automotive vehicle including an appliqué according to any of claims 1 to 36.

44. A method of forming an appliqué according to any of claims 1 to 36, the method comprising the steps of providing a substantially planar sheet; and forming the at least one rim portion on said substantially planar sheet.

45. A method as claimed in claim 44, wherein the rim portion(s) is/are formed by a forming process comprising pressure forming.

46. A method as claimed in claim 44, wherein the rim portion(s) are formed by a forming process comprising match metal forming.

47. A method as claimed in claim 44, wherein the rim portion(s) are formed by a forming process comprising cold forming.

48. A method as claimed in any of claims 44 to 47, wherein the method includes the step of applying to at least one area of a reverse side of the substantially planar sheet an ink, the at least one area then being formed into the at least one rim portion.

49. A method of manufacturing an appliqué adapted for use in an instrument, instrument cluster or instrument panel of an automotive vehicle as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 1 to 7.

50. A method of manufacturing an appliqué adapted for use in an instrument, instrument cluster or instrument panel of an automotive vehicle as hereinbefore described with reference to Figure 8, Figure 10, Figure 11 or Figure 12.

51. A display panel, decorative panel, instrument panel or appliqué for a vehicle such as an automotive vehicle, comprising a sheet form member having at least one portion integrally formed thereon, the at least one portion having a height of at least 4mm from a surface of the sheet form member, wherein there are provided at least two portions, each of the at least two portions projecting from a substantially planar first, front or

obverse surface of the sheet form member, the/each at least one portion being upstanding from an obverse surface of the sheet form member, such that the/each at least one portion is convex when viewed from the obverse surface of the sheet form member, and is concave when viewed from a second, rear or reverse surface of the sheet form member, and wherein further a first portion defines a boundary of a speedometer gauge and a second portion defines a boundary of an engine speed or rev counter or clock, first and second areas within the first and second portions optionally being provided with dial chaplets.